

her or hurts her for me to say this, but nevertheless, my consultations with Angela are very productive and very important.

The United States needs to have good relations with Europe in order for us to achieve big objectives, whether it be trade or peace or security, it's—the relations between Europe and the United States are vital. And sometimes the relations are—can be difficult. Not every country agrees, throughout Europe. And yet Angela always gives me good advice as to how to deal with the common problems we face in order to make sure that our alliance works for the common good. And I appreciate that very much.

Chancellor Merkel. I simply think that we ought to try time and again to achieve some sort of results in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Looking at another field, for example, the adoption of the resolution on Iran, after all, we were able, looking at the past months, to forge a uniform position of the international community and have that reflected in a resolution of the United Nations Security Council. I think that's an enormous success, although things went obviously more slowly than if the EU and the United States, for example, had negotiated together.

But by including Russia and China time and again in these negotiations, what evolved out of that process is an international community that is credibly being able to show Iran where there is a redline. And I think it's essential to see that the European Union, the United States, China, and Russia need to pull in the same direction on a number of other international issues.

And I think it's very important that that goes for the Quartet, for example, too, because that's where I think that we will be able to make—it's an ideal forum where we can actually be able to make a difference and in a coherent fashion.

If that Quartet were to be more active, therefore, in the future, the Presidency and also the Commission would obviously also have to meet a very specific task in fulfilling that—its part of the mandate. We need to make it clear, particularly to the not so constructive parts of Hamas, that they cannot play us off each other—us, that is the EU and the United States—but that we pull in the same direction, that we move in concert.

And I must say I am a strong believer in this multilateral effort in these international fora, because it shows clearly where the redline is to those who do not wish for democracy. And this is what we need to do, time and again make it clear to them where the limits are, where the redlines are.

President Bush. No back rubs. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 6:35 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon; President Umar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan; President Jose Manuel Barroso and Trade Minister Pascal Lamy of the European Commission; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq. Chancellor Merkel referred to President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier of Germany. A reporter referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. Chancellor Merkel spoke in German, and her remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks on the Nomination of John D. Negroponte To Be Deputy Secretary of State and J. Michael McConnell To Be Director of National Intelligence

January 5, 2007

Mr. Vice President, thank you. Madam Secretary, thank you for joining us. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the White House. I am pleased to announce that I intend to nominate Ambassador John Negroponte to be our next Deputy Secretary of State and Vice Admiral Mike McConnell to be America's next Director of National Intelligence.

Under the leadership of Secretary Rice, the men and women of the State Department are working to expand freedom and defend America's interests around the world. The Deputy Secretary of State is a key role in shaping American foreign policy and in guiding our diplomats deployed around the globe. The Deputy Secretary also helps our Nation's chief diplomat manage the State Department and helps coordinate with other Federal agencies so that America speaks to the world with one voice.

I have asked John Negroponte to serve in this vital position at this crucial moment. John Negroponte knows the State Department well. After all, he started there in 1960 as a foreign service officer in the administration of President Eisenhower. In the four and a half decades since, he has served our Nation in eight foreign service posts, spanning three continents. He served as Deputy National Security Adviser to President Reagan. He represented America at the United Nations. He served as our first Ambassador to a free Iraq. And for nearly 2 years, John has done a superb job as America's first Director of National Intelligence.

John Negroponte's broad experience, sound judgment, and expertise on Iraq and in the war on terror make him a superb choice as Deputy Secretary of State, and I look forward to working with him in this new post.

Ambassador Negroponte leaves big shoes to fill as the Director of National Intelligence. The DNI has become a core part of our national security team. The DNI determines the national intelligence budget, oversees the collection and analysis of intelligence information, ensures that intelligence agencies share information with each other, and creates common standards for intelligence community personnel. The vigilance of the DNI helps keep the American people safe from harm.

Admiral Mike McConnell has the experience, the intellect, and the character to succeed in this position. He served as Director of the National Security Agency during the 1990s. He was the intelligence officer for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the liberation of Kuwait in Operation Desert Storm. Admiral McConnell has decades of experience, ensuring that our military forces had the intelligence they need to fight and win wars.

He's worked with the Congress and with the White House to strengthen our defenses against threats to our information systems. He has earned our Nation's highest award for service in the intelligence community. As DNI, Mike will report directly to me, and I am confident he will give me the best information and analysis that America's intelligence community can provide.

I thank John and Mike for taking on these new challenges. I appreciate their service to our country. Each of them will do good work in their new positions. And it is vital they take up their new responsibilities promptly. I'm confident the United States Senate will also see the value of these two serving in crucial positions, and I would hope that they would be confirmed as quickly as possible.

Congratulations to you both. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-designate Negroponte and Director-designate McConnell.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

December 30

In the morning, at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, the President had an intelligence briefing.

January 1

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the afternoon.

Later in the afternoon, in the Rotunda at the U.S. Capitol, the President and Mrs. Bush attended the public viewing of former President Gerald R. Ford who lay in state until his funeral on January 4. Later, they visited with Betty Ford, widow of President Ford, at Blair House. They then returned to the White House.

January 2

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.